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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Latvian SSR)

DATE DISTR. 29 June 1951

SUBJECT Coastal Defenses in Latvia

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

- 25X1X
1. Although construction work on defenses in the Lepaya (56-30N, 21-00E) area was started immediately at the end of the war, efforts in this area were rather desultory, and the main Soviet defense expenditures were concentrated in the areas of the German coast, East Prussia, especially in the region near Kaliningrad, and in the area around Klaipeda. Work in Kurland was not conducted with the same speed as in these other regions, but for the last two years it has seemed that the Soviet authorities are expending considerably more effort to build up the defenses of Kurland. Local inhabitants feel that this effort indicates that the Soviet Union expects a war in the foreseeable future, and that some type of defensive action probably will take place in Latvia, possibly as a result of Soviet fear that Allied forces might invade Kurland at the same time that Soviet forces were advancing into Germany.
 2. North of Lepaya, near Tosmare Lake (56-35N, 21-05E), there are two camouflaged batteries of rapid-firing mortars. It is thought that the weapons are improved models of the Katusha or of the Stalin organ which was developed during the war. The weapons have eight barrels and are said to have such firing speed that projectiles from the first salvo have not hit the ground when the fourth salvo is being fired. It is thought that the mortar can be used as an anti-aircraft weapon against low-flying airplanes. The locations of these weapons are indicated on the attached sketch by the number 1. Each battery has two weapons of this type.*
 3. On the coast from Saraiki (56-41N, 21-06E) to Lepaya there are single bunkers which contain eight-inch artillery pieces. There is no additional information on the type of defenses which are located in the area, but it is thought that defenses are similar to those which are located in Kurland and on the Estonian islands. The guns are thought to form a chain of medium and heavy coastal artillery. Location of these weapons is indicated on the accompanying sketch by the number 2.
 4. Between Tosmare Lake and the coast is a defense point which is indicated on the attached sketch by the number 3. This point has three low armored towers, each of which is armed with three heavy artillery pieces. Such points are usually armed with twelve-inch guns, but the Soviet authorities may have begun to use fourteen-inch guns in areas of this type. This

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defense area is not new, but probably has been modernized; it is equipped with radar and protected by anti-aircraft defenses which possibly consist of 104 mm guns.

5. South of Lepaya it is possible that a similar defense system is being constructed, though work is more difficult in the area. Defense work has continued despite the fact that the tongue of land between the Baltic and Lake Lepaya makes a natural defense zone. There are some rapid-firing weapons on the south coast, similar to those described above. These weapons are shown on the attached sketch by the number 4. Eight-inch guns reportedly have been located in the area. These guns are located at number 5. It is also said that south of Lepaya is located a defense point similar to that described in paragraph 4 above; there are two towers in this area rather than three, and each tower has three heavy artillery pieces, presumably either twelve- or fourteen-inch guns. The defense system is located on the attached sketch at number 6.
6. There is a V-bomb base located south of Lepaya on a point of land on the east bank of Lake Lepaya. The coastal defense zone terminates east of this V-base, and the railroad which is located to the rear of the defense zone has a spur connection with the V-base. This spur is used for shipment of considerable quantities of construction material. No information on the V-base is available. It seems possible that the base is similar to that which is located in Pavilosta, since the local railroad probably could not handle larger projectiles or heavier freight loads. No large projectiles have been seen in this region.
7. The V-bomb station at Pavilosta consists of two tunnel-like ramps or tracks which are set in concrete. The length of the track is thought to be about 150 meters long, with an opening directed toward the west. The angle between the mouths of the two V-bases is not known, but it is thought that one is directed to the southwest and the other faces northwest. Such ramps probably were used for an earlier type of V-bomb which has since been improved, and it is thought that the bases have also been modified for use with newer and larger bombs.
8. There is little information available on V-bomb bases in northern Kurland. The region is completely isolated and cannot be entered without special permission. There is considerable transportation of material to the area at night, and a special type of "double platform" has been seen there. It may be that V-bomb bases of another type are constructed in the area, possibly for use by a fifteen-meter projectile.
9. The airfield at Dundaga (57-31N, 22-21E) is equipped with two landing strips of concrete which form a cross. One strip is set at about a forty-five degree angle from the starting point of the first.
10. The airfield located between Yelgava (56-39N, 23-45E) and Dobele (56-38N, 23-15E) consists of two crossed landing strips.

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- * Comment: There seems to be some confusion in Paragraph 2 between mortars and rocket launchers. It is not clear which weapon is under discussion.

Comment: [REDACTED]

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Attachment: Map of Lepaya area.

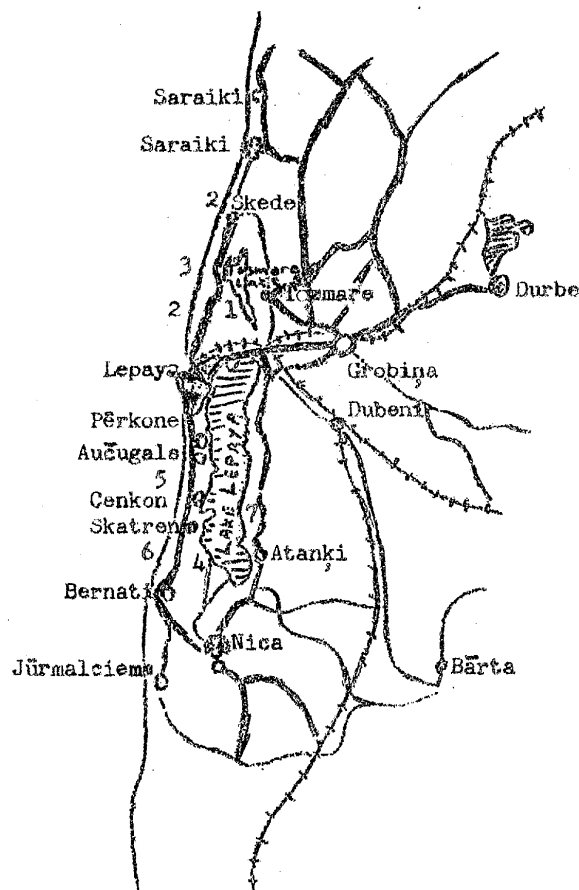
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Lepaya

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